Author’s response to reviews

Title: "Breaking bad news to antenatal patients with strategies to lessen the pain: a qualitative study"

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Version: 1 Date: 28 Dec 2017

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RESPONSE TO THE EDITOR AND REFEREE COMMENTS

The highlighted paragraphs that do not correspond to any correction of the reviewers, are improvements of the general translation of the article.

In addition, we replaced the bibliographic references that had not been accepted.

The tables have been restructured as well as the results section

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer#1: Abstract

This manuscript is written well and has a good topic.

Method: Explain the method completely. Setting, The number of participants, type of qualitative method, method of data analysis.

Results: The results of abstract should be similar to the result section of the text.
The general structure of the results has been modified, so that they are more similar to what is described in the Abstract.

Main Text Method Why do you use non-participant observation? and what was the results? The methods of data analysis is not mentioned. What was the paradigm of the study?

The use of participant observation was carried out because there was no intervention on the part of the researcher, so that there was no influence on the interaction of the professionals with the patients.

The methods section has been justified, so the paradigm and methods of analysis are explained in detail.

Results transfer the first two line of results to the method section.

Checked

Discussion Is written well.

Reviewer#2: Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper.

What ethical approval was sought?

This study was approved by the Local Research Ethics Committee Costa del Sol (Spain) CEI (003_mayo_PR2-Malas Noticias) on 01 June 2015, and was carried out in accordance with the ethical principles as set out in the Declaration of Helsinki. Written consent was obtained from all the participants in the study.

Were participants who were observed aware of why their provider interaction was being observed?

The patients were informed and gave their written consent to the procedure.
In the Results section, the headings do not seem to fit the content below them. For example, the section headed, "How to give bad news" seems to be more about resources or environment that makes it hard to deliver bad news.

Both the results section and the tables have been modified.

The results section would benefit from some quotes to support the findings.

All the citations that support the categories of the results are shown in the tables.

Currently the discussion section is written more as a review of the literature rather than as a discussion section, tying the findings of the current study to the literature. I am also unclear about the list or outline nature of the organization of the discussion section.

Changes have been made in the discussion so that there is a greater link between them and the main results.

At the end of both the results discussion sections, there is mention of language barriers. However, this is not explained at all in the rest of the paper. What language barriers exist?

Within the subcategory "responding to the emotions of patients", reference is made to language barriers, as it is a factor that hinders the care of patients, creating a barrier to provide an adequate emotional response (lines 321-323). It is also referenced within the discussion (lines 511-515).

The limitations section is very brief and needs to be increased.

Checked
Reviewer#3: General comments:

Thank you for reading this article on an interesting and important topic. However, I have some major (and some minor) comments that I strongly suggest the authors to consider.

General comments:

English language should be improved - please send the paper to a professional proof reader. Checked. The translator has revised the translation and there will be shaded words that refer to it and not to any specific comment.

General in the method chapter: Please indicate which references you were inspired from. Also indicate the type of analysis (phenomenology? Discourse analysis? Content analysis?) or theory you were inspired by. Reading your checklist for reporting on qualitative studies, I do not think this is done adequately. I suggest the authors read more about qualitative methods (could also be inspired by the checklist) and do a more thorough description of method and analysis. The checklist has been revised and the criteria that has not been met has been corrected. The section of methods has been adapted to the required specifications, being referenced with the necessary literature for this purpose. (Lines 102-155)

General on the result and discussion section: This is not a correct way of presenting results. The three categories presented in the text are not the same as in the tables. You can not only give the information in a table and not in the text. I also think it is way too many categories. These should be compiled into fewer ones (or perhaps themes, depending on the type of analysis). It can be due to your very broad aim - which can give you way too many things to report. I suggest the authors should get more familiarised with how to report The discussion section should also not be written in point form or numbered as it is at the present. on qualitative studies, perhaps by reading some other published qualitative articles. The results and categories have been compiled, as requested (Line 157). The way of expressing results and discussion has been modified according to the recommendations of the reviewers. The tables have been restructured.

Page 2 line 55: add 'always' (if communication is always important) Checked
Page 3, line 56-58: This sentence do not seem right - rewrite. Checked

Page 104-105: Very broad aim. Also a bit strange to read 'phenomenological' in brackets. I assume you will talk later about this later? Checked

Page 5, 106: Here you talk about discourses - which makes one assume some kind of discourse analysis. Explain more. Checked

Page 5, 111: Please specify time of the data collection. Checked

Page 5, 123: Please indicate that it is the principal investigator of the study. Checked

Page 5: 126-128: Here you state that you avoided personal interpretation. I find this very problematic; qualitative research cannot be 'objective'. Instead you have to write how your preunderstanding might have affected your findings. Checked

Page 6, 133-141 is one long sentence. This should be rewritten and made into shorter sentences. Checked

Page 6, 142: who is the principal investigator (author number)? Checked

Page 6, 143-144: what do you mean by scientific rigour and how was this reviewed by other researchers? (Lines 146-151)

Page 6, 144: What do you mean by that both predefined categories and emerging ones were identified? Please explain. (Lines 141-146)
Page 6, 144-147: Please explain more of what you mean by triangulation and how it was done. Also use a reference for triangulation. (Lines 146-151)

Page 6: 153-154: This should belong to the method chapter. But you could have a 'characteristic of the participants' section in the beginning of the result chapter or just before (where you place your table). Checked. Moved to methods section

Page 6, 155: Please indicate which were the categories you found here. (Lines 157-159)

Page 7, 159: How do you know they are ignorant of communicative techniques? It sounds like the researchers' interpretation and should be verified with a quote or more explanation (of what this was indicated by). You also say that you use content analysis (although not inspired by who) - and I do not know whether it is content or latent messages (assume it is content since not more else is written). If so, it is hard to understand how you come to this interpretation (that health personnel were ignorant of communication techniques). Does this rely on content coding of your participant observation notes? You should also say something more about how these notes were done, for example mere descriptions of observations or own interpretation). Checked.

Page 7, 165-168: This is unclear. Was this what the health care staff indicated (ideal place for CBN)? If so, please specify. Checked.

Rest of the article: Please see general comments on methods, results and discussion. Checked.